



Project Spotlight: Brazil

Project Name: Associação Recanto São Francisco

Website: <http://www.recantosaofrancisco.org.br/>

Overview: The Recanto São Francisco is a non profit institution situated in a rural area in the Municipality of Extrema (on the border of São Paulo and Minas Gerais) where they run an orphanage for more than 60 children. Children aged from 6 to 18 years old are now cared for at the center with future plans to expand. The e-Learning for Kids (EFK) software was introduced at Recanto in mid 2010 along with a donation of six notebook computers.

Usage: In addition to the notebooks, the center also has seven desktop computers with access to the courseware in Portuguese. The lessons are accessed locally in an offline format since Internet is very slow and dependent on a rural phone line. The e-lessons are used mainly by the children under 12 years old. They are also used by a small group of children that have mental deficiencies and offers this special group a marvelous opportunity for digital inclusion. There are two teachers: a school teacher and a computer teacher who both work together. This is necessary because the children are hyperactive, lack concentration, and can have low self-esteem in addition to emotional/mental problems.

Impact: Children between 6 and 10 years old are reported to have the best experience with the EFK courses. It is also their first experience with a computer. Children with special needs (and/or whose mental age is much lower than their physical age) are also interested in the courses. In this latter case, they especially like the Math lessons and think of them as a computer game that helps them with school work. They find the courses fun and they help them to develop a sense of inclusion instead of feeling intimidated by the computer. All children find the courses interesting and they say they learn without realizing it. The teachers also find the courses a big help for the subjects taught at school.

“Estefania likes the course ‘Playing With Numbers.’ When she and the others use the EFK lessons, we see in their faces that they are happy and they communicate better with their classmates. For us, this makes the difference!”

—Douglas, Administrator, Associação Recanto São Francisco